



## **Anchorage Women Convicted of Defrauding the Permanent Fund Dividend Program**

The State of Alaska Department of Law has announced that Anchorage residents Carolyn Owens (62) and Akilah Owens (35) have been convicted on felony charges relating to PFD applications submitted while Akilah and her sister, J.R., were living outside the state of Alaska and not eligible for the program. In total, Carolyn and Akilah Owens received over \$50,000 in wrongly-paid PFDs.

The original charging documents allege that Carolyn Owens filled out, signed, and submitted PFD applications for her adult daughters Akilah and J.R. without disclosing that Akilah had been living in Texas between 1997 and 2008, and that J.R. had moved to Texas in 1985 and has not returned to live in Alaska since that time. As a result, Akilah received \$20,170.28 from the applications submitted in her name between 1997 and 2009, and Carolyn Owens received a total of \$33,321.97 from the applications submitted in J.R.'s name between 1986 and 2013.

Carolyn Owens pled guilty to Scheme to Defraud, covering the entire period from 1986 through 2013. The crime of Scheme to Defraud relates to conduct constituting a scheme to obtain \$10,000 or more by false or fraudulent pretenses, and is a class 'B' felony. Carolyn Owens was sentenced to three years in jail, with two years suspended. She will be on probation for six years, during which time she must pay restitution in full and complete 200 hours of community work service.

Akilah Owens pled guilty to Theft in the Second Degree and Unsworn Falsification in the First Degree. The crime of Unsworn Falsification in the First Degree relates specifically to providing false information on an application for the Permanent Fund Dividend. Both crimes are class 'C' felonies. Akilah Owens was sentenced to 18 months in jail with 12 months suspended. She will be on probation for five years, during which time she must pay restitution in full and complete 500 hours of community work service.

This investigation was conducted by the Criminal Investigations Unit of the State of Alaska Department of Revenue, which is the agency tasked with investigating fraud against the Permanent Fund Dividend Program.

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